



THE LIBRARY
THE UNIVERSITY
OF TEXAS

THE
ABRAHAM I SCHECHTER
COLLECTION OF
HEBRAICA AND JUDAICA
PRESENTED BY
THE KALLAH OF
TEXAS RABBIS

1939

R
Sch
417

OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
RAL LIBRARIES
TAÑEDA LIBRARY

DATE RETURNED

“OUR DUTIES AS CITIZENS”

Sermon

PREACHED AT THE

Golders Green Synagogue

LONDON, N.W.11

ON

SUNDAY, APRIL 26th, 1931

BY

THE REV. I. LIVINGSTONE,

AT A

Civic Service

In honour of the Election

COUNCILLOR A. A. NAAR, M.B.E., J.P.

as Chairman of the Hendon Urban District Council.

Printed by request of the Board of Management
of the Synagogue.

H. SHARP & SONS, BATH.

"OUR DUTIES AS CITIZENS"

Sermon

PREACHED AT THE

Golders Green Synagogue

LONDON, N.W.11

ON

SUNDAY, APRIL 26th, 1931

BY

THE REV. I. LIVINGSTONE,

AT A

Civic Service

In honour of the Election

COUNCILLOR A. A. NAAR, M.B.E., J.P.

as Chairman of the Hendon Urban District Council.

Printed by request of the Board of Management
of the Synagogue.

Order of Service

Conducted by the Rev. I. LIVINGSTONE and the Rev. A. LITTENBERG, together with the Choir, under the direction of Mr. B. H. BUSKY.

MAH TOBU

AFTERNOON SERVICE

SERMON AND PRAYER

PRAYER FOR THE KING
AND ROYAL FAMILY

ALENU

PSALM 150

ADON OLAM

GOD SAVE THE KING

The Service was attended by the Members of the Hendon Urban District Council, by the Members of the Hendon Rotary Club, and by other prominent local residents of Golders Green and Hendon.

"Our Duties as Citizens"

—oo—

"And thou shalt select out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and thou shalt place such men over the people to be rulers of thousands and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties and rulers of tens, so that they may act with justice to the people at all times." (Exodus, xviii. 21, 22).

This statesman-like counsel, which was given by Jethro to Moses in the early days of Jewish history, was a wise principle of decentralisation which has been followed ever since in progressive countries and has not become antiquated, for it is this principle which is acted upon in the division of the metropolis into boroughs and districts, the local affairs of each of which are to an extent governed by men and women elected as its representatives.

Leaders who are charged with the care of public interests generally receive the public confidence, and deserve to be honoured and welcomed; and to-day we are assembled as a congregation of Jews worshipping side by side with non-Jews, to celebrate the official visit of the new Chairman of the Hendon Urban District Council—a respected member of this Synagogue—and to welcome too the members of the Council who have accompanied him to this House of God.

In extending this welcome, may we not echo the conviction that the qualifications for office which Jethro demanded of the governing authorities of his day are possessed by those who have been selected to govern this district, that the Chairman and the members of the Council are able men, with vigorous intellects and inflexible courage, of fundamental piety and humanity—men of integrity, who are incorruptible, men of truth, whose word is their bond.

This service is a service of welcome to the chief citizen of the district. But it is something more than that. It is a service which reminds us of our duties as citizens. Every man and every woman in this district—as in other districts—enjoys rights and privileges. But he or she should also discharge correspondingly high duties and responsibilities. Every citizen should take a keen interest in the welfare of his city or district. Every citizen should take a share of responsibility in the administration of public affairs. Every citizen should do something for the welfare of his fellow-citizens—not of course in order to serve any selfish interests, not because of any specific axe that one may have to grind, and not from any love for vanity or social distinction, but solely and purely for the general good, for the glory of God.

And, addressing myself for the moment to my own co-religionists, I would emphasise the fact that this is a duty which devolves equally upon the Jew as upon the non-Jew. It is our duty to obey both in the letter and in the spirit the exhortation of the Hebrew prophet—"Seek the welfare of the city wherein ye dwell."

Bound as we are by the ties of race and religion to our Jewish brethren all over the world, and attached as we are by historic associations and memories which bid us work for our regeneration as a people in the land of Israel, we are at the same time proud to work with untiring zeal and devotion for the welfare of the land of our birth or adoption, the land in which we live as citizens.

History records that the words of Jeremiah have been carried out with devotion even in countries where our brethren have suffered brutal persecution. Even in countries where the Jews have endured shameless cruelty, they have not been lacking in their political patriotism. The members of the house of Israel have always faithfully served the countries in which they have lived. They have shown their allegiance on the battlefields of the world, and proved it by their unfailing patriotism. And they have been loyal subjects in times of peace as in times of war.

If this is so in countries where our race does not breathe the air of freedom, it is presumably to be expected that our citizenship is even more keen in a country like England where racial and religious prejudices are disappearing, where religious convictions do not stand in the way of advancement to the highest civic honours, and where men of the Jewish faith can co-operate with men of other faiths in positions of honour and responsibility and gain the confidence and respect of the general public.

The position of Chairman of the Council is one such position of honour—one which demands not only ability, but many other qualities. And, in greeting the Jewish Chairman of the District Council we are

confident that the period of office which he has commenced will be one in which these qualities will be exercised for the lasting good of the district.

I would also welcome here this afternoon, in the name of the Synagogue, my colleagues of the Hendon Rotary Club, with whom it is always a pleasure to co-operate on a basis of good-will and true brotherhood. May they continue to be true to their great ideal—service above self—and may they inspire all with whom they come into contact, to work not only for the district, and not only for the country and the empire, but for the peace and prosperity of all mankind.

And, if I may add one special word this afternoon to the Jewish members of this congregation, I would say that our citizenship need not, nay must not, at any time make us forget the duties of our faith. There may of course be some exceptional instances to the contrary, but as a general rule if a Jew respects his own religion he will gain and not lose the respect of the non-Jew.

My message to you all this afternoon is a very brief one and a very simple one. Combine your religious loyalty with your civic loyalty. Be true to your respective creeds and traditions, and be at all times ready to co-operate and to join forces, so that the ideals which are common to us all may be brought nearer to realisation.

We all, for instance,—I hope without exception—look forward to the success of the League of Nations in its great effort to unite the peoples. I would like to see too a League of Religions. The instruments of the varied religions are different. It is perhaps in

the divine plan that there should be varieties of language, of individuality, and of characteristics. But, whilst each should be free to pursue its own ideals of self-development, whilst each should play its own instrument, why should there not be a harmonious blending of sounds—a glorious symphony, realising the truth of the prophet's words, "Have we not all One Father? Hath not One God created us?"

Oh that we may live to see the foundation of an international conscience in which the love of God and the love of righteousness may become the driving power of men and women of all races and nationalities, so that religion may speak with a united voice—a voice appealing for good-will, brotherhood and peace.

For the furtherance of this worthy aspiration may there never be lacking in this district able leaders, who will be honoured with the public confidence, and, in the rank and file, men and women who will actively labour for the general welfare and serve the highest interests of justice and civic peace.

Let us not live narrow and selfish lives, but let us promote the welfare of society with all our heart and might.

May this service of welcome to Hendon's new leader, whose term of office will no doubt coincide with the opening of a new chapter in local history, help to cement the good relations that exist between Jew and gentile, and strengthen our resolves to put forth our devotion and our loyalty for all that is good, for all that is noble, for all that is divine.

Amen.

Prayer.

Almighty God,

We assemble here this day to thank thee for Thy mercies and Thy goodness.

Bestow Thy blessing upon us.

Give unto us the spirit of wisdom and understanding, that we may be fitted to do such deeds as are good in Thy sight.

Bless those who occupy them selves in faithfulness with the needs of this district—the Chairman of the Council, and the members of the Council, and all those who co-operate with them in a spirit of service.

Bless this congregation, and those who have this day received the sacred privilege of being elected to guide its affairs, so that the ideals for which it stands may be fostered.

Bless Thy people Israel, so that its aspirations may be fulfilled.

Bless this country and all its inhabitants.

Send Thy light and Thy truth unto all the peoples on earth, so that they may understand that righteousness alone exalteth a nation, and that by might shall no man or kingdom prevail.

Speedily cause the lovers of international equity and brotherhood to rejoice, and bring liberty and peace unto all the dwellers on earth.

"The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you.

The Lord turn His face unto you, and give you peace."

Amen.

2109051387

MINCAT 7973 MAIN



THE LIBRARY
THE UNIVERSITY
OF TEXAS

THE
ABRAHAM I SCHECHTER
COLLECTION OF
HEBRAICA AND JUDAICA

PRESENTED BY
THE KALLAH OF
TEXAS RABBIS

1939

R
Sch
417